

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 3 and 13 have been cancelled and claims 1, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15 and 18 have been amended. Claims 1, 5-11 and 14-18 are pending and under consideration.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8-11, 13, 14 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,108,627 to Sabourin. Claims 7 and 15-17 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Sabourin in view of US Patent No. 5,913,194 to Karaali et al.

Each of the independent claims has been amended to substantially include the limitations of dependent claim 3, which has been cancelled. As amended, the independent claims require that the further constituent in the given word is arranged between a first subword and a second subword, and the out-of-vocabulary (OOV) treatment for phonetic transcription of the further constituent is performed as a function of the phonetic transcription of the first subword and the phonetic transcription of the second subword.

Beginning at column 5, line 12, Sabourin describes a word transcriber, which is shown in FIG. 3. The word transcriber has a word cleaner 302, a transcription handling section 304, a word transcription post processing unit 306 and a rotary dictionary 308. The transcription handling section 304 is shown in more detail in FIG. 4 and described beginning at column 5, line 55. Column 5, lines 55-60 indicate that the transcription handling section 304 has a plurality of handlers 401 through 406 arranged in cascade such that if a handler fails to generate a successful transcription hypothesis, the next handler in the chain is executed. These handlers include an affix handler 402 which is described at column 6, line 28 through column 7, line 14. Column 6, lines 28-63 describe the following:

Affix handler 402 transcribes input orthographies by identifying a root word within the orthography, and then using an "affix rule knowledge base" to extend the basic transcription of the root word to the complete transcription. The affix rule knowledge base includes three sets of transcription rules generated by a linguistic expert. The first set of transcription rules is an orthographic affix transformation rule base that specifies how root orthographies may be modified to generate their affixal forms. For example, given the root word "admit," the orthographic affix transformation rule base may specify that this word can be affixed by deleting the final "t" and appending the sequence "ission," thereby forming the word "admission." Other orthographic transformation rules include final consonant doubling and final silent "e" deleting.

The second set of transcription rules, called a transcription affix transformation rule base, specifies how root transcriptions are modified when the affixal form of the word is formed. For example, the transformation of "admit" (/ad-mit/) to "admission" is obtained by deleting the /t/ and adding /=S*n/ to obtain /ad-mi=S*n/. Finally, the third set of

transcription rules, called the part-of-speech transformation rule base, specifies how the part of speech of the root word changes when modified to its affixal form. For example, the verb "admit," when modified to "admission," becomes a noun.

In operation, orthographies received by affix handler 402 are decomposed using the orthographic affix transformation rule base into a sequence consisting of the orthographies' prefixes, root word, and suffixes. The root word is then transcribed using a dictionary lookup scheme similar to that implemented by dictionary accessor 401. The transcription for the whole orthography, including its part of speech, is then obtained by modifying the transcription of the root word according to the transcription affix transformation rule base and the part-of-speech transformation rule base.

The affix handler transcribes input orthographies by identifying a root word within the orthography, and then uses an "affix rule knowledge base" to extend the basic transcription of the root word to the complete transcription. The transcription rule base takes into account the fact that portions of certain affixes are contextually influenced. See column 6, lines 64-66.

Based on the above, it appears that each handler of Sabourin either transcribes the whole word or transcribes nothing. Therefore, a combination of first and second subwords and a further constituent is not suggested by Sabourin. Additionally, the subwords generated by different handlers are not routed back to any handler. See the flowchart of FIG. 4 and column 6, line 28 through column 7, line 14. In Sabourin, there is no out-of-vocabulary (OOV) treatment of the further constituent as a function of the phonetic transcription of first and second subwords, as claimed. Because Sabourin does not disclose or suggest the limitations of the independent claims, it is submitted that the claims patentably distinguish over this reference.

With regard to the obviousness rejection, it should be noted that the Examiner refers to "Lin" at page 5, line 1 of the Office Action. However, it does not appear that Lin is being relied upon. The Examiner cites Karaali et al. only for its teachings regarding a neuron network. Karaali et al. does not compensate for the deficiencies discussed above with regard to Sabourin. Accordingly, the claims patentably distinguish thereover, and both prior art rejections should be withdrawn.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

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If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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